craft. Air India will acquire four Boeing 747-400 aircraft during 1993 and 1994 at an estimated cost of Rs. 2333.33 crores.

News item in Hindustan Times captioned "Driving passengers up against wall

794. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE :

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report captioned "Driving passengers up against wall" in the Hindustan Times of April 10, 1993;

(b) if so, the extent upto which Government agrees with the assessment of the situation relating to the air passengers woes as depicted therein; and

(c) what the steps are taken or being taken to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Maintenance service for private planes

795. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN :

SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI:

DR. JINENDRA KUMAR JAIN:

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ:

SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India is losing over Rs. 100 crores every year in foreign exchange as private airline operators are forced to go abroad for almost all their aircraft maintenance requirements;

(b) if so, what are the facts in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Indian Airlines refuses to service the private aircrafts;

(d) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the East West Airlines has approached the Indian Airlines for a maintenance tie up at the beginning of its operations last year;

(f) if so, what has been the response of the Indian Airlines thereto; and

(g) what steps Government propose to take to save crores of rupees of foreign exchange which is frittered away every year from the country ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) and (b) No, Sir, Private air taxi operators have their own facilities for carrying out routine maintenance of their aircraft. Some maintenance work is done by private organisations also. However, the operators do not have facilities for major maintenance. None of the private air taxi operators has sent its aircraft abroad for maintenance so far. Some air taxi operators have plans to send their aircraft abroad for major maintenance. One B-737 aircraft of East West Airlines is undergoing major inspection (Check 'C') at Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. Bangalore.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Facilities with Indian Airlines are limited and are not adequate to meet the requirements of private parties in addition to in-house needs.

(e) No, Sir.